quired booty they purchased partisans who rendered them powerful and terrible. At last they ascended the throne by force.

Historians quote the example of King Dejoces, of the Medes, whom these invested with the royal dignity because he had done them good service as a judge. But it is incorrect to refer this example to the origin of royalty. When the Medes made Dejoces their king, they already constituted a people, a political body; in the present case, the first political society was to be formed by the first king. The Medes had borne the oppressive yoke of the Assyrian monarchs; on the contrary, the king of whom mention is made here, was the first king that ever existed, and the people who submitted to his dominion were a society of free-born men who had never yet known any power to rule over them. A power that had already been tolerated on a previous occasion, may be *restored* in this quiet manner, but in this quiet way no entirely new and hitherto unknown power can be instituted.

It seems therefore more conformable to the course of events to suppose that the first *king* was a usurper, called to the throne, not by a voluntary, unanimous call of the nation—a nation did not yet exist—but by force and fortune, and by a readily organized military power.

THE MISSION OF MOSES.*

The foundation of the Jewish republic by Moses is one of the most memorable events recorded in history, important if we regard the strength of mind with which it was accomplished, and still more important, if we regard its consequences to the world, which continue even to the present moment. Two religions that govern the larger portion of the inhabited globe—Christianity and Islamism—both rest upon the religion of the Jews; without it neither Christianity nor the Koran would have existed.

In a certain sense it is even indisputable that we are indebted to the religion of Moses for a large portion of the culture we now possess. Through its instrumentality a precious truth—which the unaided efforts of reason would only have discovered in the course of a slowly progressing development—namely, the doctrine of one God, was spread among the people and established as an article of creed, until it had time to dawn in the clearer intellects as a rational perception. By this means a large portion of the human race was spared the sad mistakes to which the belief in many gods must finally lead, and the constitution of the Hebrews enjoyed the characteristic distinction that the religion of their sages was not opposed to that of the people, as was the case among the enlightened heathens. Viewed in this light, the Hebrews must appear to us as a nation invested with high importance as a subject of universal history, and the evil which has been imputed to them, or the efforts of shallow wits to degrade them in public appreciation, should not prevent us from doing them justice. The low and depraved character of the nation cannot efface the sublime merit of its lawgiver, nor can it do away with the great influence which this nation has acquired in history. We cannot help valuing it as an impure vessel in which precious treasures have been preserved; we have to respect it as the channel, be it ever so impure, which was chosen by Providence for the purpose of communicating to us the noblest of all goods, truth, and which was destroyed as soon as it had accomplished its purpose. By pursuing this course we shall avoid the double wrong of imputing to the Jews qualities which they never possessed, or of robbing them of a merit that cannot be denied them.

It is well known that the Hebrews went to Egypt as a single nomadic family, not numbering above seventy souls, and that they increased in this country until they had become a nation. During a period of about four hundred years that they resided in Egypt, their numbers increased to about two millions, among whom they counted six hundred thousand fighting men at the time when they marched out of Egypt. During this long sojourn they lived separately from the Egyptians, from whom they were distinguished by a separate region of country, which they occupied, and by their nomadic habits that made them an object of aversion to the Egyptians, and excluded them from the civil rights of the natives. They kept up their nomadic system of government, the father ruled over the family, an hereditary prince over the tribes, thus constituting a state within the state, which finally excited the apprehensions of the kings.

Such a separate multitude of people in the heart of the country, leading an idle nomadic life, and closely united among themselves, without having a single interest in common with the kingdom, might become dangerous during an invasion, and might be tempted to profit by the weakness of the kingdom of which they had been the idle spectators. Political prudence suggested the propriety of watching them closely, of giving them employment, and preventing their increase. They were oppressed by heavy labor, and inasmuch as it was found that they might be made useful to the kingdom, interest and political cunning went hand in hand, and lead to the system of exacting a heavy tribute from them. They were compelled in the most inhuman manner to labor for the king, and special overseers were appointed to incite them to work, and abuse them. This barbarous treatment did not prevent their increase. Sound policy would have thought of distributing them among the people and allowing them equal political rights with the rest of the nations; but this was prevented by the general detestation which the Egyptians felt for them. This detestation was still heightened by the consequences it must necessarily entail. When the Egyptian King assigned to the family of Jacob the province Goshen, on the east bank of the Nile, as its dwelling-place, he probably never imagined that two millions of people would live in it at some future period; the

* This essay was first published in the tenth number of the Thalia.

province was of limited extent, although it was a generous gift, even if calculated for not more than the one-hundredth part of this number. Since the locality where the Hebrews resided did not expand with their numbers, the consequence was that with every succeeding generation they lived more closely together, until they were finally crowded together in a very small space in a manner which was exceedingly prejudicial to their health. The consequences of such a mode of existence were inevitable. Uncleanliness and contagious diseases prevailed among them. Here it was that the evil first commenced which has visited this nation to the present period; but at that time it raged to a frightful extent. Leprosy, the most frightful epidemic of those countries, broke out among them, and was perpetuated through many generations. The very sources of life were contaminated by this plague, and an accidental disease was finally converted into an hereditary national malady. The universality of this plague may be inferred from the numerous precautionary measures which the lawgiver instituted against it; and the unanimous testimony of profane writers, the Egyptian author Manetho, Diodorus of Sicily, Tacitus, Lysimachus, Strabo, and a number of others, who scarcely knew any thing else of the Jewish nation than this national malady, shows how universal and deep was the impression it had made upon the Egyptian mind.

This leprous disease, a natural consequence of their confined habitations, of their bad and scanty food, and of the ill treatment which they experienced, became a new cause of injustice and wrong. Those who at first had been despised as shepherds and avoided as strangers, now were detested and expelled from all intercourse, as pestiferous outcasts. The fear and repugnance which the Egyptians had felt against them at all times, were now accompanied by loathing and a deep and repelling contempt. Every thing was deemed lawful against people whom the wrath of the gods had struck down in such a frightful manner, and the most sacred rights of man were disregarded in their case without the least hesitation.

It is no wonder that they were treated the more barbarously, the more the consequences of this barbarous treatment became visible, and that they were punished more and more cruelly for the misery which their own persecutors had inflicted upon them.

The vicious political system sought to remedy the mistakes it had committed against them, by another still more flagrant wrong. Unable, in spite of all oppression, to prevent the increase of the Hebrew nation, the Egyptians hit upon the dreadful and inhuman plan of causing all the new-born sons of the Hebrews to be destroyed by the midwives. But, man's better nature be praised! despots are not always obeyed when they issue inhuman commands! The midwives found means and ways to evade this unnatural order, and the government had to resort to forcible measures in order to execute its plan. By royal command, authorized murderers invaded the dwellings of the Hebrews, destroying every male offspring in the cradle. In this way the Egyptian government must finally succeed in carrying out its murderous designs, and, unless a saviour should arise, the Jewish nation must eventually be extirpated.

Whence was this saviour to come? He could scarcely be expected to arise among the Egyptians, for why should one of them intercede in behalf of a nation that was a stranger to him, whose language he did not even understand, and would probably not take the trouble of studying, and that seemed to him both incapable and unworthy of a better fate. Still less probable it was that he would arise in their own midst, for how deeply had the Hebrews sunk in the course of a few centuries, in consequence of the inhuman treatment the Egyptians had inflicted upon them! They had become the most brutal, the most malicious and depraved people on the earth, utterly brutalized by the debasing bondage of three hundred years, intimidated and embittered by this oppression, degraded in their own eyes by an hereditary and most infamous disease, unmanned and paralyzed for all heroic resolutions, sunk to the condition of brutes by a long-lasting imbecility. How could a free man, an enlightened mind, a hero and a statesman, be expected to come from such a debased race? Where should a man be found among them who would inspire respect for such a despised mob of slaves, kindle feelings of conscious dignity in the hearts of such a deeply oppressed people, and render such ignorant and raw bands of shepherds superior to their more cunning oppressors? A bold and heroic leader could no more be hoped for among the Hebrews, than among the degraded pariahs of the Hindoos.

Here the hand of Providence, which unties the most complicated knot by the simplest means, excites our admiration, not the Providence which interferes in the economy of Nature by violent means, but the Providence which so arranges the government of Nature as to effect extraordinary things in a quiet way. A native Egyptian was not inspired by the national sympathy necessary to become the saviour of the Hebrews. A mere Hebrew was deficient in power and mind for this purpose. What expedient did destiny resort to? It snatched a Hebrew at an early age from the bosom of his brutalized nation, and placed him in possession of Egyptian wisdom; thus it was that a Hebrew, reared by Egyptians, became the instrument, by means of which his nation was freed from bondage.

For three months, a Hebrew mother of the tribe Levi, had concealed her new-born son from the King's murderers, who were commissioned to destroy every male offspring; at last she abandoned all hope of affording him an asylum much longer. Necessity suggested a ruse that might perhaps enable her to preserve him. She laid her babe in a little box made of papyrus, which she had protected by means of pitch against filling with water, and now awaited the hour when Pharaoh's daughter was in the habit of bathing. Shortly previous, the babe's sister was directed to place the box among the rushes where the princess had to pass, and could not help noticing it. The mother remained in the neighborhood, to watch the fate of the infant. Pharaoh's daughter saw the box, and inasmuch as the babe pleased her, she determined to save it. His sister now ap-

proached and offered to obtain a Hebrew nurse, which was granted. A second time the son was given to his mother, who now enjoyed the privilege of publicly showing and educating him. Thus he learned the language of his people, became acquainted with their customs, and his mother probably took every opportunity of depicting to him their pitiable condition in the most heart-rending language. After he had reached the age when it became necessary to remove him from the common fate of the nation, the mother returned him to the princess who now took charge of his destiny. She adopted him, and called him *Moses*, because he had been saved from the water. In this way, from the son of a slave and the victim of murder, he became the son of a princess, and in this capacity enjoyed all the advantages reserved for the children of kings. The priests to whose order he belonged the very moment he became a member of the royal family, took charge of his education, and instructed him in the erudition of Egypt, which was the exclusive property of their caste. It is even probable that they initiated him in all their mysteries, since we infer from a passage in the Egyptian historian Manetho, where he designates Moses as an apostate from the Egyptian religion and a priest who had escaped from Heliopolis, that Moses was destined for the priestly office.

In order to determine the degree and quality of the instruction which Moses received in this school, and what share the education he received from Egyptian priests, had in his subsequent legislation, we shall have to subject the doctrines and usages of the Egyptian priesthood to a closer examination. Let us hear the testimony of ancient authors on this head. The apostle Stephanus states that Moses was initiated in the wisdom of Egypt. The historian Philo informs us that Moses had been initiated by the Egyptian priests in the philosophy of symbols and hieroglyphics, and in the mysteries of the sacred animals. This testimony is confirmed by a number of other authors, and after casting a glance at what has been called Egyptian mysteries, we shall discover a remarkable similarity between these mysteries and the subsequent acts and institutions of Moses.

We know that the worship of the most ancient nations soon assumed the form of idolatry and superstition; even among tribes whom Holy Writ designates as worshipers of the true God, the notions entertained of the Supreme Being were neither pure nor noble, nor were they at all founded upon a lucid and rational comprehension of his character. As soon as, in consequence of a better organization of human society and the establishment of a regular government, a separation of men into classes had taken place, and the care of divine things had become the exclusive business of a particular class of men; as soon as the human mind, free from all harassing care, had leisure to devote itself exclusively to the contemplation of its own essence and of nature; as soon as the physical mechanism of nature was more clearly understood, the reason must finally overcome those coarse prejudices, and the ideas concerning the Supreme Being must assume a higher and purer character. The idea of a general connection of all things must necessarily lead to the idea of a Supreme Intelligence, and where should such an idea have taken root sooner than in the mind of a priest? Egypt being the first civilized state of which history makes mention, and the most ancient mysteries having come from Egypt, it was most probably here that the idea of the unity of the Supreme Being was first conceived by the human mind. The fortunate discoverer of this soul-exalting idea selected among those who were around him, able subjects to whom he confided it as a sacred treasure, and thus it was perpetuated from one thinker to another through perhaps an unknown series of generations, until it finally became the property of a small society capable of comprehending the idea, and developing it still further.

Inasmuch as a certain amount of knowledge and intellectual culture is required to correctly comprehend and apply the idea of one God; inasmuch as the belief in one God must necessarily lead to the contempt of idolatry, which was the dominant religion, it was readily seen that it would be indiscreet or even dangerous to spread this idea among the people. Without previously upsetting the customary gods, and showing them in their ridiculous nakedness, this new doctrine could not expect to meet with a favorable reception. Moreover it could not be expected or foreseen that every one who began to feel the absurdity of the old superstition, would at once comprehend the pure and exalted idea of one God. The whole constitution of society was based upon idolatry; if this faith was crushed, all the pillars which supported the political edifice were likewise torn down, and it was very uncertain whether the new religion that was substituted for the former superstition, would at once be established with sufficient firmness to support the social edifice.

On the contrary, if the attempt to crush the ancient gods, failed, fanaticism would rise in arms, and the innovators would become the victims of an enraged crowd. It was therefore deemed advisable to make the new truth the exclusive property of a small class, to select those among the crowd who showed the required capacity, as members of this class, and to invest the truth itself which was to be kept hidden from impure eyes, with a robe of mystery that could only be removed by him who had been capacitated for this business.

For this purpose the hieroglyphics were chosen, a symbolic language that concealed a general idea under the garb of sensual symbols, and was based upon a few arbitrary rules concerning which they had agreed. Having been reminded by the worship of idols what strong impressions may be made upon the youthful heart through the instrumentality of the imagination and the senses, these enlightened men did not hesitate to make use of this artifice in behalf of truth. They therefore conveyed the new ideas to the soul with a certain sensual pomp, and by all sorts of contrivances adapted to this end, they first roused up in the pupil's mind a deep feeling of emotion that rendered the mind more susceptible to the new truth. Of this character where the purifications which the candidate had to undergo, the washings and sprinklings, the wrapping up in linen cloths, abstinence from all sensual enjoyments elevation and

devotional solemnity of the mind by singing, a long-lasting silence, alternate darkness and light, and the like.

These ceremonies, accompanied by those mysterious figures and hieroglyphics, and the truths that lay hidden in them, and were preceded by these formalities, were designated in their integrality as the Egyptian mysteries. They were located in the temples of Isis and Serapis, and constituted the prototype of the subsequent mysteries of Eleusis and Samothrace, and of the more recent order of the free-masons.

It seems past all doubt that the meaning of the ancient mysteries of Heliopolis and Memphis, during their purity, was the doctrine of one God, refutation of paganism, and the immortality of the soul. Those who participated in these important teachings, called themselves epoptæ, or beholders, since the recognition of a previously hidden truth may be compared to the transition from darkness to light, or perhaps for the reason that the newly recognized truths were actually beheld by them under the garb of symbolic signs.

They could not, at once, enjoy the full perception of the truth, because the mind had first to be purified of many errors, and had first to pass through many preparations before it was able to bear the full light of truth. Hence there were degrees of initiation, and it was only in the inner sanctuary that the scales were completely removed from their eyes.

The epoptæ acknowledged one highest cause of all things, a primary force in Nature, the Being of beings being identical with the demiurgos of Greek sages. Nothing surpasses in sublimity the simple greatness with which they spoke of the Creator of the world. In order to distinguish him in a very marked manner, they did not name him. Names, they said, are only intended to enable us to discriminate between different objects; he who is the Only One does not require a name, for there is not any body with whom he could be confounded. Under an old statue of Isis the following inscription was read: "*I am what is*," and upon a pyramid in Sais, the following ancient and most remarkable inscription is found: "*I am who is, was, and will be; no mortal man has lifted my vail.*" No one was permitted to enter the temple of Serapis, who did not wear upon his breast or forehead the name Iao or Joha-ho, a name that has almost the same sound and probably the same meaning as the Hebrew Jehovah; and no name was pronounced with more respect in Egypt than this name Iao. In the hymn which the hierophant or president of the sanctuary sang to the candidate, the following preliminary explanation was given concerning the nature of the deity. "He is alone and of himself, and to this only One all things owe their existence."

Before being initiated in the Egyptian mysteries, the candidate had to undergo circumcision. Pythagoras had to comply with this requirement, This distinction between them and others who were not circumcised. was to denote a closer fraternity, a closer relation to the deity, for which purpose Moses introduced circumcision among the Hebrews.

In the interior of the temple the candidate saw several sacred vessels significative of some sacred meaning. Among them was a sacred ark named the coffin of Serapis, which, according to its origin, was intended as a symbol of hidden wisdom, but afterward, when the priesthood had degenerated, was used as an instrument of priestly fraud and mercenary mysticism. It was the privilege of the priest, or of a special class of ministers of the sanctuary, named on this account, Kistophors, to carry the ark in the procession. Only the hierophant was permitted to remove the lid of the ark, or even to touch it. Of one person who had the boldness to open it, it is related that he was suddenly bereft of his reason.

In the Egyptian mysteries several hieroglyphical images of gods were seen, that were composed of several figures of animals. The well-known Sphinx is of this kind; by these figures it was intended to designate the attributes which are united in the Supreme Being, or else to combine in one body the highest powers of the living. Something was taken from the mightiest bird, as the eagle; from the mightiest wild quadruped, as the lion; from the most powerful domestic animal, as the bull; and lastly from the most powerful animal of all, man. The figure of the bull, or Apis, was especially employed as the symbol of power, in order to designate the omnipotence of the highest Being; in the primitive tongue the name for bull is cherub.

These mystic forms, to which none but the epoptæ had the key, imparted to the mysteries themselves a sensual exterior which deceived the people, and partook somewhat of the character of idolatry. Thus the superstition of the people was sustained by the external garb of the mysteries, whereas those who dwelled in the sanctuary discarded it with scorn.

We can comprehend how this pure deism was compatible with idolatry, for while the latter was overturned among the priests, it was favored among the people. This contradiction between the religion of the priests and that of the people was excused by the first founders of the mysteries on the score of necessity. It seemed less dangerous and less impracticable, because leaving more room for hope, to arrest the evil consequences of a concealment than those of a premature unvailing of truth. But in proportion as unworthy members were received among the initiated, and the institution lost its primitive purity, mystery, which had originally been a necessary expedient, was set up as the ultimate end of worship; and instead of gradually removing superstition and fitting the people for the reception of truth, advantage was taken of their ignorance, and they were plunged more and more deeply into it. Priestly artifice now took the place of those pure intentions, and the institution whose object it was to preserve, and cautiously to spread a knowledge of the only true God, now became the most powerful means of eradicating it, and substituting in its place an idolatrous worship. In order to preserve their influence over the public mind, hierophants deemed it advisable to postpone their ultimate disclosures as long as possible, and, instead of gratifying the expectation of knowing the truth, to obstruct the avenues to the sanctuary by all sorts of theatrical tricks. At last the key to the hieroglyphics and

mysterious symbols was entirely lost, and whereas, it was the original design to use them as a vail for truth, they were now regarded as truth itself.

It is difficult to say whether Moses was educated during the bright period or the decay of the institution; it is probable that the institution was already declining, as we may judge from a few jugglerie which the Jewish lawgiver borrowed from the mysteries, and from a few rather inglorious tricks which he resorted to. But the spirit of the original founders had not yet disappeared, and the doctrine of one God still rewarded the initiated.

This doctrine which necessarily leads to a contempt of idolatry, and the belief in the immortality of the soul which could not well be separated from such a doctrine, were the precious treasures vouchsafed to Moses by his initiation in the mysteries of Isis. At the same time he obtained a more accurate knowledge of the powers of Nature which were likewise ranked among the mysteries. This knowledge enabled him afterward to perform miracles, and to contend in Pharaoh's own presence with his teachers and magicians whom he even surpassed in many respects. His subsequent career shows us that he had been an able disciple, and had reached the highest degree of initiation.

In the school where he was educated, he gathered a treasure of hieroglyphics, mystic figures and ceremonies, of which his genius afterward availed itself. He had wandered through the whole domain of Egyptian wisdom, had penetrated with his thoughts the whole priestly system, had weighed in the balance its defects and its advantages, its strength and its weakness, and had cast a deep and significant glance into the political science of the people.

It is not known how long he remained in the school of the priests, but from the fact that he first assumed the political leadership of his nation at the age of eighty years, we infer that he devoted twenty or more years to the study of the mysteries and of the art of government. His sojourn among the priests does not seem to have excluded him from intercourse with his people, and he had abundant opportunities of witnessing the barbarities under which they groaned.

The Egyptian education had not extinguished his national sympathies. The abuse which his people suffered, reminded him of his Hebrew extraction, and a deep feeling of indignation was kindled in his bosom whenever he saw one of them maltreated. The more his own self-respect increased, the more he revolted at the sight of the cruelties which his people had to endure.

One day he saw a Hebrew wincing under the blows of an Egyptian overseer; the sight overpowered him; he killed the Egyptian. Soon the deed became known, he had to flee from Egypt and hide himself in the Arabian desert. According to many authors, this flight took place in his fortieth year, but there is no proof for this statement. It is sufficient for us to know that Moses was not very young when it occurred.

This exile is the beginning of a new epoch in his life; if we desire to judge correctly his subsequent political career in Egypt, we have to accompany him through his solitude in the Arabian wilderness. He carried a bloody hatred against the oppressors of his people, and the knowledge he had derived from the Egyptian mysteries, along with him into the desert. His mind was full of ideas and plans, his heart full of bitterness, and nothing in this wild and uninhabited region disturbed his solemn and contemplative mood.

According to the record, he guarded the sheep of an Arabian Bedouin, Jethro. How deeply his soul must have been wounded by the fall from his prospects and hopes in Egypt to the position of a shepherd in Arabia, from the future ruler of men to the hired servant of a Nomad?

Dressed as a shepherd, he was animated by the spirit of a ruler, by a restless ambition. In this desert, where no present interest chains his mind, he seeks refuge in the past and future, and feeds upon his own silent thoughts. The scenes of oppression he had witnessed, now pass before him with all the pang of past wrongs, and sting his soul to the quick. Nothing seems more intolerable to a great soul than to suffer wrong; moreover it was his own people that were suffering. A noble pride is awakened in his breast, and an intense desire for action and distinction inflames his heart.

All that he has gathered during many years, all the beautiful and great things he has planned, is all this to die with him in this wilderness? is he to have planned and meditated to no purpose? His fiery soul cannot bear such a thought; he raises himself above fate; this wilderness is not to be the limit of his activity; the Supreme Being into whose knowledge he has been initiated in the mysteries, has destined him for something great. His imagination, inflamed by solitude and silence, takes the part of the oppressed which appeals most powerfully to his heart. Like feelings attract each other, and the unfortunate most readily sympathizes with his unfortunate brother. In Egypt he might have become an Egyptian, a hierophant, a general; in Arabia he becomes a Hebrew. The idea: "I will redeem this people," looms up in his mind as a glorious thought.

But how was it possible for him to carry out his plan? There are countless obstacles in the way, and those which he has to contend against among his own people, are the most terrible of them all. There he finds neither harmony nor confidence, neither self-respect nor courage, neither patriotism nor the enthusiasm that will rouse a bold desire for action; a long bondage, an oppression of four hundred years has stifled all these sentiments. The people at whose head he is to place himself, are both incapable and unworthy of a bold struggle for independence. What remains to be done? Before attempting the deliverance of his people, he must first prepare them for this blessing. He must first re-awaken the consciousness of the human rights they have lost. He must restore the qualities which a long degradation has stifled among them; he must kindle hope, confidence, heroism, and enthusiasm in their hearts.

But these sentiments can only arise from the true or illusory consciousness of strength, and whence are the slaves of the Egyptians to derive this consciousness? Suppose he should succeed

in carrying them away for a moment by his eloquence, will not this artificial enthusiasm leave them in the lurch at the first sight of danger? Will they not, more dispirited than ever, relapse into bondage?

Here the Hebrew is assisted by the Egyptian priest and statesman. From his mysteries, from his school at Heliopolis he remembers the efficient instrument by means of which a small priestly caste governed millions of raw men like a band of untutored children. This instrument is confidence in supernatural protection, faith in supernatural agencies. Not knowing any thing in visible nature, in the natural course of things, which would inspire the hearts of his oppressed people with courage; unable to bind their confidence to earthly things, he binds it to heaven. Abandoning the hope of exciting in their hearts the consciousness of their own strength, he gives them a God who possesses it for them. If he succeeds in kindling the confidence in this God in their breasts, he has given them strength and boldness, and the confidence in this higher power is the flame by means of which he will have to kindle all their other virtues and energies. If he succeeds in imposing himself upon his people as the instrument and messenger of this God, they became like playthings in his hands; he will be able to guide and control them as he pleases. The question now occurs: What God is he to announce to them, and by what means shall he be able to inspire them with confidence in him?

Is he to announce to them the true God, the Demiurgos or Iao in whom he himself believes?

How can he imagine that a slavish rabble like his own people, will comprehend and cherish a truth that was the heritage of a few Egyptian sages, and the comprehension of which required a high degree of culture? How could he hope that the dregs of Egypt would comprehend that which could only be comprehended by the best thinkers of the land?

But, even if he had succeeded in imparting a knowledge of the true God to his people, in their present situation they could not have made made use of him, and the knowledge of such a God would have undermined rather than promoted his project. The true God cared for the Hebrews no more than for any other people. The true God could not do battle for them, could not overturn the laws of Nature for their sakes. The true God suffered them to fight their battle with the Egyptians, without assisting them in the struggle by miracles; of what use was such a God to his people?

Is he to announce to them a false and fabulous God, against which his reason rebels, whom the mysteries have rendered odious to him? His understanding is too enlightened, his heart too sincere and noble for such fraud. He is not disposed to base his beneficent enterprise upon a lie. The enthusiasm he now feels, would not lend him its fire for an act of fraud, and he would soon lack the cheerful courage and perseverance for a contemptible part that would be so much opposed to his convictions. He designs to render the blessing he is on the point of imparting to his people, perfect; he not only designs their independence, but likewise their happiness. He wants to build his work upon eternal foundations.

Therefore it must not be based upon fraud, but upon truth. How is he to conciliate all these contradictions? As regards the true God, he cannot announce him to his people, because they are unable to comprehend him; and he is unwilling to announce a fabulous god, because he despises this trick. What, therefore, remains for him to do, *but to announce to them his true God in a fabulous manner.*

He now examines his rational religion, and tries to determine what he has to add to or take from it, in order to secure for it a favorable reception among his Hebrews. He identifies himself with their situation, with their limited powers of comprehension, and, by diving into his people's own minds, he explores the hidden threads to which he has to fasten his truth.

He provides his God with such attributes as can be comprehended by the Hebrews in their present condition, and as are adequate to their present wants. He adapts his Iao to the people to whom he intends to announce him; he adapts him to the circumstances under which he announces him. Thus arises his Jehovah.

In the minds of his people he discovers faith in divine things, but this faith has degenerated into the crudest superstition. He has to eradicate the superstition, without impairing the faith. He has only to detach it from its present unworthy object, and turn it toward his new deity. The superstition itself favors him in his undertaking. It was a common belief in those times, that every nation was under the protection of a special national deity, and it pleased the national pride to place this deity above the gods of every other nation. The divine character of these gods was not denied on this account, only they must not elevate themselves above the gods of other nations. Upon this error Moses grafted his truth. He made the demiurgos of the mysteries the national God of the Hebrews, but he went a step further.

He did not content himself with making this God the national God of the Hebrews, he likewise made him the only God, and hurled all other gods round about him into annihilation. He made him the Hebrews' own God, in order to accommodate himself to their comprehension, but at the same time he subjected all other nations and powers of natnre to his sway. By the manner in which he represented his God to the Hebrews, he saved two of his most important attributes, unity and omnipotence, and rendered them more efficient in this human garb.

The puerile vanity of possessing the deity exclusively, now had to be made subservient to the interest of truth, and had to secure willing ears to his doctrine of one God. It is only a new error by means of which he overthrows the former; but this new error is much nearer to the truth than the one which he overthrew; it is this slight admixture of error which secures the success of his truth; it is to this foreseen and indeed premeditated misapprehension of his doctrine that he is indebted for all the good he accomplishes by means of it. What could his Hebrews have ac-

complished with his philosophical God? With such a national God, on the contrary, he achieves wonders among them. Identify yourselves with the condition of the Hebrews. In their ignorance they measure the strength of the gods by the fortune of the nations over whom they watch. Abandoned and oppressed by men, they imagine they are forgotten by the gods; the relation which they hold to the Egyptians, must be held by their God to the gods of the latter; compared to these, he is a small light, they even doubt his existence. Suddenly they are told that they too have a protector in the Heavens, that this protector has waked up from his slumber, that he is girding himself, and preparing to do great deeds against his enemies.

This announcement of their God is like the call of a chieftain to place himself under his victorious banner. If this leader gives them a proof of his strength, or if they happen to remember him from former periods, the delirium of enthusiasm will overpower even the most timid; this result was likewise calculated by Moses in conceiving his plan.

The conversation he had with the vision in the burning bush, shows us the doubts he had conceived in his own mind, and the manner in which he had solved them. Will my unhappy nation win confidence in a God who had neglected it so long, who now descends to the people suddenly as from the clouds, whose name they have not even heard, who had been for centuries an idle spectator of the abuse they had to suffer at the hands of their oppressors? Will they not regard the God of their enemies as the more mighty? This thought must more immediately arise in the heart of the new prophet. How does he remove his doubts? He makes his Iao the God of their fathers, he grafts him upon their old traditions, thus converting him into an old, well-known national god. In order to show that he meant the true and only God, in order to prevent all confusion with any of the monstrous outbirths of superstition, in order to leave no room for misapprehensions, he invests him with the sacred name he has in the mysteries. I am who I am. Tell the people of Israel, he makes him say, *I am* has sent me to you.

In the mysteries, this was really the name of the deity. To the stupid Hebrews this name must be unintelligible. They could not possibly understand any thing by this name, and Moses might have had more success with another name; but he preferred running this risk to giving up an idea in which his whole soul was interested, which was, to acquaint the Hebrews with the God who was taught in the mysteries of Isis. Since it is pretty certain that the Egyptian mysteries had flourished long before Jehovah appeared to Moses in the bush, it is surprising that he assumed the same name for his God that he had been known by, in the mysteries of Isis.

It was not sufficient that Jehovah announced himself to the Hebrews as the God of their fathers, he had likewise to prove himself a powerful God, if they were to have confidence in him; is was the more necessary, as their previous ndition in Egypt could not possibly have given them a high opinion of their protector. Inasmuch as he was introduced by a third person, he had to invest this person with his own power, and enable him to demonstrate by extraordinary acts, both his own mission and the power and greatness of him who sent him.

If Moses intended to justify his mission, he had to support it by miraculous acts. There is no doubt that these acts were performed. How they were performed, and how they have to be understood, is left to every man's own discretion.

The form in which Moses related his mission to the Hebrews, has all the characteristics necessary to inspire them with confidence, and this was sufficient for the time being; with us this effect is no longer needed. We know, for instance, that, if the Creator of the world should conclude to appear before a man in fire or wind, it is indifferent to him whether the man is barefoot or not. Moses makes his Jehovah order him to take off his shoes, for he knew that among his Hebrews the idea of divine sanctity had to be assisted by some sensual symbol; such a symbol had adhered to his memory from the ceremonies of initiation.

He doubtlessly anticipated the objections that might be raised against him, and embodied them in his narrative, where they were answered by Jehovah himself. He moreover did not accept his mission until after a long resistance; hence the command of God, who imposed this mission upon him, must seem so much more solemn. In general he depicts with the most characteristic and striking details that which the Israelites would find it the most difficult to believe, and it is beyond doubt that he had good reason for doing so.

If we condense our previous remarks in one short sentence, what was the plan which Moses proposed to himself in the wilderness?

He intended to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, give them independence, and a political constitution of their own in a separate country. But inasmuch as he was well acquainted with the difficulties that would beset him in such an undertaking; inasmuch as he knew that the energies of those people could not be depended upon until their confidence in themselves, courage, hope, and enthusiasm had been restored; inasmuch as he foresaw that his eloquence would not be able to rouse the slavish feelings of his crushed countrymen, he perceived the necessity of announcing to them a higher and supernatural protection, and of ranging them, as it were, under the banner of a divine leader.

He therefore gives them a God whose first business is to deliver them out of Egypt. But this is not sufficient. In the place of the country he takes from them, he has to give them another, which they first have to conquer with arms in their hands, and where they have to maintain themselves by similar means. For this purpose, he unites their forces in a political body, and gives them laws and a constitution.

In his capacity of priest and statesman, he knows that the most powerful and the most indispensable support of all political constitutions is religion; he therefore has to employ the God whom he had given them only for the purpose of delivering them out of Egypt, as his guide in pre-

paring a code of laws for his people; and he announces him in the character with which he intended to invest him. For purposes of legislation, and the foundation of a political constitution, he requires the help of the true God, for Moses is a great and noble man, who is unable to found upon a lie a work that is to last forever. He designs to realize the permanent happiness of the Hebrews by the constitution he intends to give them, and this end can only be reached by founding his legislation upon truth. Their mental faculties are too dull to receive this truth; he is unable to familiarize their souls with it by rational means. Being unable to convince them, he has to persuade, bribe, overpower them by the influence of supernatural agencies. He invests the God whom he announces to them, with attributes that render him comprehensible and commendable to feeble minds; he has to envelop him in a heathenish robe, and has to be content if his people only estimate the heathenish attributes of his true God, and receive the true only in a heathenish dress. By this means he gains a great deal; the basis of his legislation is truth; a future reformer need not first overthrow the constitution, in order to change a few definitions,—a result which is inevitable in all false religious systems, as soon as they are examined by the light of reason.

All the other states of that period, and even of subsequent ages, are based upon fraud and delusions, and upon idolatry, although we have shown that in Egypt a small caste entertained correct notions of the Supreme Being. Moses, who belongs to this caste, and is indebted to it for his better knowledge of the Supreme Being, is the first who not only dares to divulge these secret doctrines of the mysteries, but to make them the basis of a political constitution. For the benefit of his age and of posterity, he becomes a traitor against the mysteries, and causes a whole nation to partake of a truth that had hitherto been the exclusive privilege of a few sages. It is true, with the new religion it was beyond his power to impart to them the power to comprehend it; in this respect the Egyptian epoptæ enjoyed a great advantage over them. The epoptæ recognized truth by their reason; all that the Hebrews could do was to blindly believe it.*

THE LEGISLATION OF LYCURGUS AND SOLON.†

LYCURGUS.

In order to appreciate the plan of Lycurgus as it deserves, we have to look back upon the polical condition of Sparta as it existed at that period, and study the constitution which the republic possessed at the time when Lycurgus proposed to offer his new code of laws. Two kings, both of them having equal power, were at the head of the government; each jealous of the other, each endeavoring to create for himself a party, and to limit by such means the power of his associate. From the two first kings, Procles and Eurysthenes, this jealousy had been perpetuated by their respective descendants down to the period when Lycurgus made his appearance upon this stage; During this long period Sparta had been continually disturbed by factions. Each king sought to bribe the people by granting extraordinary license, and these grants finally drove the people to insolence and rebellion. Between monarchy and democracy the republic was balancing to and fro, passing rapidly from the one extreme to the other. The rights of the people and the powers of royalty were not yet distinguished by suitable and fixed lines of demarkation, riches accumulated in a few families. The rich citizens tyrannized over the poor, and the despair of the latter broke out in rebellion.

Torn by internal discord the feeble republic had to become the prey of its warlike neighbors, or else split into several tyrannical governments. It is in this condition that Sparta was found by Lycurgus; ill-defined limits of the royal and popular powers, unequal distribution of property among the citizens, want of public spirit and harmony, and a complete political exhaustion, were the evils that claimed the most urgent attention of the legislator, and which he had therefore chiefly to consider in framing his laws.

On the day that Lycurgus intended to promulgate his new laws, he caused thirty of the most influential citizens whom he had first gained over to his cause, to appear in the public square; they were armed in order to intimidate those who might feel tempted to resist. King Charilaus, frightened by these arrangements, fled into the temple of Minerva, because he imagined that this whole movement was directed against himself. But this fear being removed from him, he was even prevailed upon to give an active support to the plan of Lycurgus.

The first change affected the government. In order to prevent hereafter all uncertain wavering of the republic between royal tyranny and anarchical democracy, Lycurgus created a third power which was to serve as a counterbalancing influence, and was denominated the Senate. The Senators, of whom there were twenty-eight, making thirty with the kings, were to side with the people if the kings abused their power; on the contrary, if the people should become too powerful, they were to side with the kings, and protect them against the people. An excellent arrangement by means of which Sparta escaped forever from the violent internal commotions that had convulsed it heretofore. By this means either party was prevented from trampling on the other; against both the Senate and the people the kings were powerless; nor could the people arrogate to themselves the reins of power, if the kings and the Senate were arrayed against them.

A third case had been overlooked by Lycurgus; where the Senate itself abused its power. As a

* The readers of this essay may be reminded of an essay of a similar import, entitled: *On the most ancient Hebrew Mysteries, by Br. Decius*, a celebrated and highly deserving author, from which essay I have extracted a few ideas and facts here enunciated.

† These Lectures were first published in the eleventh number of the Thalia.

mediating power the Senate, without endangering the public tranquillity, might with the same ease join either the kings or the people, but the kings could not combine with the people against the Senate without endangering the safety of the republic. The Senate soon began to improve the advantages of its position, and to use its power beyond the bounds contemplated by the constitution. In this the Senate succeeded more easily, since the small number of senators made it the more easy to concert their measures. The successor of Lycurgus filled this gap by introducing the Ephori who were to hold the power of the senators in check.

A more dangerous and bolder arrangement was the second one made by Lycurgus. It was to divide the whole country in equal portions among the citizens, and to remove the distinction between rich and poor forever. The wholet erritory was divided into thirty thousand shares, the land around Sparta into nine thousand, each share being sufficient to afford abundant support to a family. Sparta now exhibited a beautiful and attractive view, and Lycurgus was delighted with the sight when he made a trip through the country. The whole of Laconia, he exclaimed, is like a field which brothers have shared among each other as brothers.

Lycurgus felt disposed to distribute personal property as he had done the soil. But there were invincible obstacles in the way which impeded the accomplishment of this measure. He therefore sought to reach this end by a circuitous route, and to cause that which it was beyond his power to nullify by a decree, to fall by an inherent want of conservative vitality.

He commenced by prohibiting gold and silver coin, and introducing iron coin in its stead. At the same time he affixed a trifling value to a large and heavy lump of iron, so that a considerable space was required to keep a small sum of money, and horse-power to move it from one place to another. To prevent every temptation to put a value on this kind of money, on account of the iron, he caused the metal which was used for such purposes, to be made red hot, whereupon it was cooled in vinegar and hardened, and by this means rendered unfit for any other purpose.

Who now would be tempted to steal or to accumulate riches, since the small profit could neither be concealed nor used?

Lycurgus did not content himself with depriving his fellow citizens of the means of luxury; he removed from their sight the objects that might have tempted their desires. A foreign merchant had no use for Sparta's iron money which was the only coin they possessed. Artists who worked for the luxurious gratification of the senses, disappeared from Sparta, no foreign vessel entered the Spartan ports, no adventurous traveler sought to make his fortune in this country; no merchant showed himself to lay Spartan vanity and luxury under contribution, for there was not any thing that could be taken in exchange, except iron coin which was rejected by every other nation. Luxury ceased, because there was not any body to keep it up.

In another manner Lycurgus sought to stifle the germs of luxury. He directed all citizens to partake of the same fare at a common table. It was unlawful to cultivate effeminate habits at home, and to indulge in costly viands prepared in one's own private kitchen. Every month, each citizen had to provide a certain quantity of aliments for the public table, and in return the republic furnished him the food he required. Fifteen persons generally sat together at the same table, and every member of such a mess had to be unanimously voted for, in order to enjoy the privilege of a seat among them. No one was permitted to stay away without a valid excuse; this rule was so stringently enforced that even king Agis was refused by the ephori the privilege which he had requested, of dining alone with his spouse after his return from a victorious campaign. Among the aliments used by the Spartans, the black soup has become famous; a dish in whose praise it was remarked that it could not be difficult for the Spartans to be brave, since it was much easier to die than to eat their black soup. They seasoned their meals with mirth and fun, for Lycurgus himself was so fond of it, that he erected an altar to the god of laughter in his own house.

By introducing among his Spartans, the custom of taking their meals in common, Lycurgus accomplished a great deal for his purpose. All extravagant expenditures for costly plate ceased, because there was no use for such articles at the public table. Excesses were prevented forever; sound and robust bodies were the consequence of this moderation and order, and healthy parents were able to beget healthy offspring. Eating in common accustomed the citizens to live in company with each other, and to look upon each other as members of the same political body, not to mention the important fact that such a uniform mode of life must exercise an influence toward producing a state of commendable equanimity.

By another law, no roofs were permitted except such as had been made by means of an ax, nor were doors permitted to be used except such as had been made by means of a saw. No one dreamed of placing costly furniture in such a plain building; every part of the house must agree with the whole.

Lycurgus saw perfectly that it was not sufficient to make laws for his fellow citizens; he had to make citizens for these laws. In the minds of the Spartans he had to secure the belief in the perpetuity of his constitution; he had to render them insensible to foreign impressions.

The most important part of his legislation was the education of children; this closed, as it were, the circle within which the Spartan republic was to revolve as an independent and self-existing unit. Education was an important work of the state and the state a perpetual result of education.

His solicitude for children extended even to the beginning of life. The bodies of young females were hardened by exercise, in order to facilitate the production of robust and sound offspring. They even went without clothes in order to learn to endure any kind of exposure. The lover had to carry them off by stealth, and was only permitted to visit them during the night and stealthily. This prevented all excessive and continued

intimacy even during the first few years of their marriage, and had the effect of preserving their love in a state of freshness and intensity.

All jealousy was banished from the marriage relation. Every thing was made subordinate to the main object, even female modesty. He sacrificed the faithfulness of a wife, in order to procure healthy children for the republic.

As soon as the child was born, it belonged to the state. Father and mother had lost it. It was examined by the parents: if it was strong and well-shaped, it was confided to a nurse; if it was feeble and deformed, it was thrown down a precipice from the top of Mount Taygetus.

The Spartan nurses became famous throughout Greece, for the rigid manner in which they brought up their children. On this account they were sent for in distant parts. As soon as a boy had reached his seventh year, he was taken from them, and was educated, fed, and instructed with other children of the same age. At an early age he was taught to endure fatigue, and to acquire a perfect mastery over his limbs by continued and severe exercise. If the boys grew up to manhood, the noblest among them enjoyed the hope of finding friends among the older citizens who were attached to them with an enthusiastic affection. The old were present at their games, watched the rising genius, and quickened their ambition by praise or censure. If they desired a full meal, they had to steal the materials, and if any one was caught in doing this, he might expect severe retribution and public disgrace. Lycurgus chose this method of giving them, at an early age, habits of cunning and intrigue; for the warlike purposes for which he brought them up, he deemed these qualities as important as bodily strength and courage. We have adverted to the fact that Lycurgus did not hesitate to sacrifice modesty to his political ends. However, we should not omit to consider that neither the profanation of marriage nor this legitimate theft could occasion in Sparta the political injury which might be caused by such legislation in our own countries. Inasmuch as the state took charge of the education of children, their education was independent of the happiness and purity of marriages; inasmuch as little value was attached to property, and property was generally held in common, the security of property was of trifling importance, and an attempt against property, especially when directed by the state and perpetrated for some definite political end, was no crime in the eyes of the law.

The young Spartans were forbidden to adorn themselves, except when going to battle or to meet some other danger. At such times they were permitted to adorn their hair, to ornament their garments and arms. It was a saying of Lycurgus, that the hair rendered handsome people still handsomer, and ugly people frightful. It was undoubtedly a cunning contrivance of the lawgiver to combine an appearance of festive mirth with occasions of danger and to deprive them by this means of their dangerous character. He went still further. In war he relaxed the severe discipline somewhat; the mode of living was a little more liberal, and transgressions were punished less rigorously. Hence war became a sort of recreation to the Spartan citizens, and they anticipated it with feelings of delight as an occasion for merry-making. If the enemy approached, the Spartan king caused the Castorean hymn to be sung, and the soldiers marched out in close ranks, at the sound of the flute, to meet the danger with fearless bravery.

The consequence of Lycurgus' legislation was to cause every Spartan to prefer his country to his own private interests, and, free from private care, to live exclusively for the former. Hence he deemed it advisable to save his fellow-citizens the trouble of attending to the ordinary business of life, and to cause even these ordinary kinds of labor to be performed by strangers, lest even the care of business or the interest in domestic affairs should withhold their attention from the national concerns. The labor in the field and house was therefore attended to by slaves, who were held like cattle in Sparta. They were called Helotes, from the Lacedemonian city Helos, whose inhabitants, against whom the Spartans waged war and who were conquered and made prisoners by the latter, became the first slaves the Spartans had. The name Helotes was afterward given to all Spartan slaves who were taken in battle.

The treatment which these unhappy people endured in Sparta was most inhuman. They were regarded as mere chattels, that might be used for political purposes as their owners pleased. In their persons humanity was disgraced in a most shocking manner. In order to illustrate to the Spartan youths the evil effects of drinking fermented liquors, these Helotes were compelled to intoxicate themselves, in which condition they were exposed to the public gaze. They were compelled to sing infamous songs, and to dance like fools; they were forbidden to indulge in any of the dances reserved for free citizens.

They were used for much more inhuman purposes. The state felt interested in putting the courage of its boldest youths to severe tests, and preparing them for war by bloody practices. For this purpose a number of young men were sent by the Senate into the country, at certain periods of the year; they were provided with nothing but a dagger and some food. In the daytime they had orders to keep themselves concealed; but at night they went out upon the pulic roads, killing the Helotes who fell into their hands. This arrangement was known as the Cryptia or ambush; it is doubted, however, whether it originated with Lycurgus. At all events, it is a legitimate consequence of his system. In consequence of fortunate wars, the number of Helotes grew so considerable that they became a source of danger to the republic. Driven to despair by such a barbarous treatment, they incited rebellions. The Senate hit upon an inhuman expedient, which was justified by the plea of necessity. Under cover of granting them their liberty, two thousand of the bravest Helotes were assembled on a certain occasion during the Peloponnesian War, and, adorned with wreaths, were conducted to the temples in solemn procession. Here they suddenly disappeared, and nobody ever knew what had become of them. It is a certain fact, which became proverbial among the Greeks, that Spar-

tan slaves were the most miserable of any, and that Spartan citizens were the freest men in the world.

All kinds of labor being performed by the Helotes, the citizens lived in continual idleness. The young men spent their time in warlike games and evolutions, and the old people were spectators and judges on such occasions. It was considered disgraceful for an old man in Sparta to stay away from the place where the young were educated. In this way every Spartan became identified with the republic, all his acts became public acts. Youth grew up in presence of the nation, and old age declined in life before the same witnesses. Unceasingly the Spartan kept his eye on Sparta, and Sparta kept its eye upon him. He was a witness to every occurrence, and his own life was witnessed by all. The love of glory was continually stimulated, the national spirit continually fed; the idea of *country* and *public interest* became interwoven with the inmost life of the citizens. The public festivals, which were exceedingly common among the idle Spartans, afforded other opportunities of inflaming the national enthusiasm. On such occasions warlike songs were sung, the ordinary burden of which was, the glory of the citizens who had fallen in battle for their country, or encouragement to bravery. At such festivals the citizens were ranged in three choruses. The chorus of the ancients commenced singing: *In past ages we were heroes!* The chorus of the men responded: *We are heroes now; come who may to try us!* The chorus of the boys concluded: *Heroes we shall be; we shall obscure you by deeds!*

On casting a hasty glance at Lycurgus' legislation, we are seized with a pleasant surprise. Among all similar institutions of antiquity, this legislation is undoubtedly the most perfect, the Mosaic legislation alone excepted, which it resembles in many respects, especially in its fundamental principles. It is complete within itself. All its parts cohere, one being logically dependent upon and resulting from the other. No better means could have been chosen to reach the end which Lycurgus had in view, namely, to found a republic isolated from all others, sufficient unto itself, and capable of maintaining itself by its own internal power and vital action. No lawgiver has ever imparted to any state the unity, the national character and public sentiment, which Lycurgus succeeded in developing in every Spartan breast. By what means was this end reached? By concentrating the activity of his countrymen upon the concerns of the republic, and closing up every channel that might have diverted their attention from such an exalted object.

By his legislation, he had removed every thing that attaches the soul or inflames the passions, except the public welfare. Wealth and pleasure, sciences and arts, had no access to the hearts of the Spartans. The universal poverty which was the lot of every citizen, did away with the envious contrast of fortunes that excites the love of gain in most hearts; the desire of property disappeared together with the opportunity of exhibiting and using it. The deep ignorance in the arts and sciences which, like a dark cloud, weighed upon every Spartan mind, protected the constitution from encroachments that might have been attempted by enlightened minds; this very ignorance, together with the rude national pride peculiar to every Spartan, constituted an insurmountable and unceasing barrier to their intercourse with the citizens of other Greek republics. Even in their cradle they were sealed with the stamp of the republic, and the more they went contrary to other nations, the more they became attached to the common centre of patriotism. The country was the first spectacle that the Spartan boy beheld as soon as his mental unfolding began. He woke from his slumber in the bosom of the republic; he was surrounded by nothing but the nation, the national concerns, and his country. These made the first impression upon his brain, and his whole life was an unceasing renewal of this impression.

In his own home, the Spartan citizen found nothing that could have attracted him; the lawgiver had taken care to remove all domestic incentives. It was only in the bosom of the republic that he found occupation, delight, honor, reward; all his impulses and passions were directed to this centre. The state owned the energy and powers of all its citizens; the public sentiment which inflamed all hearts, must kindle and feed the national spirit in every single heart. It is therefore no wonder that Spartan patriotism attained a height that must seem incredible to us. The Spartan citizens could never hesitate, if occasion required, to choose between self-preservation and the preservation of the republic.

These facts enable us to comprehend how it became possible for the Spartan king Leonidas and his three hundred heroes to deserve an epitaph that is the most beautiful of its kind, and the sublimest monument of patriotic virtue. "Relate of us, wanderer, on thy arrival in Sparta, that we have fallen here in obedience to its laws."

It must be admitted that nothing could be more profound, more adequate to the end than this constitution; that it is a complete masterpiece of its kind, and, that, if rigidly enforced, it must necessarily continue by virtue of its own inherent power of preservation. But I should commit a great mistake, if I confined my picture to these statements. This admirable constitution deserves our severest condemnation; nothing could prove more disastrous for humanity than to see such a form of government established in every country. We shall have no difficulty to become convinced of the truth of this assertion.

Considered with reference to his own end, the legislation of Lycurgus is a masterpiece of political science and knowledge of human nature. He wanted to establish a powerful, self-sustaining, indestructible republic; political strength and durability were his aim, which he accomplished as far as possible with the means at his command. But if the aim of Lycurgus is contrasted with the great aims of humanity, an emphatic condemnation must take the place of the admiration which a first hasty glance had extorted from us. Every thing may be sacrificed to the highest interests of the state except the end for which the state itself is designed. The state itself is not the end; it is

important only as a means to the realization of this end, which is no other than the progressive development of all the powers of man. If a constitution impedes this development, it is unworthy of our approbation, were it otherwise ever so ingenious and complete within itself. In such a case its durability becomes a reproach rather than a distinction; it is only the prolongation of an evil; the longer it continues, the more obnoxious it becomes.

In general, in judging the value of political institutions, we may adopt the rule, that they deserve our commendation only in so far as they favor, or, at any rate, do not interfere with the development of all the useful powers of humanity. This observation applies to religious as well as to political laws; either are condemnable, if they fetter any of the powers of the human mind. A law, for instance, which should compel a nation to adhere to the dogma that may have seemed the most excellent at one time, would be a violation of the rights of humanity, which could not be justified by any pretext, were it ever so plausible. It would be opposed to the highest good, to the highest object of society.

Provided with this general standard, we cannot hesitate to pronounce judgment upon the republic of Lycurgus.

A single virtue was practiced in Sparta at the expense of all the rest: it was patriotism.

To this artificial sentiment the most natural and most beautiful affections of the human heart were sacrificed.

The political character was formed at the expense of morality. Sparta knew nothing of conjugal love, maternal affection, filial piety, friendship; it only knew citizens and civil virtues. For years we have admired the Spartan mother who indignantly repelled the son that returned from the fight, and hastened to the temple to thank the gods that the other one had met his death. It is wrong to congratulate Humanity upon such an unnatural strength of mind. A tender mother is a much more beautiful phenomenon in the moral world than a heroic monster which denies the natural sentiment in order to gratify an artificial duty.

What a much more beautiful spectacle is afforded by the rude warrior Marcius in his camp before Rome, who sacrifices vengeance and victory, because he cannot bear seeing his mother's tears flow.

By making the state the father of the child, the natural father ceased to hold this relation. The child never learned to love its father or mother, because being taken from them in its earliest infancy, it only knew its parents by hearsay, not by the favors it had received at their hands.

In the Spartan breast the common sentiment of humanity was extirpated in a much more revolting manner, and the respect for man, which is the soul of duty, was irretrievably lost. Inhumanity against their slaves was enjoined by law. In the Spartan code, the dangerous rule was laid down to consider men as means, not as the end, a perversion that led to a legal demolition of the foundations of the natural right and morality. Morality was sacrificed in order to obtain an end which can only be valuable as a means toward the establishment of this morality.

Can there be any thing more contradictory, and can the subversion of any natural law be followed by more frightful consequences, than the antagonism existing between the legislation of Lycurgus and the inherent rights of human nature? Not enough that Lycurgus founded his republic upon the legalized ruin of morality; he undermined the highest destiny of humanity by arresting, through a cunningly-devised political system, the minds of the Spartans where he found them, and preventing every possibility of progress.

Industry was banished from Sparta, sciences were neglected, all commercial intercourse was rendered impossible, all foreign products were excluded. By this means all the channels of mental progress and enlightenment were closed; within the limits of a perpetual monotony, of a gloomy egotism, the Spartan republic was to revolve around its own centre.

It was the united aim of the citizens to preserve what they possessed, and to remain what they were, not to acquire new truths, and to elevate themselves to a higher degree of culture. Inexorable laws had to guard the mechanism of government against all innovations, or even against improvements suggested by experience. With a view of securing permanency to this local and temporary legislation, the minds of the people must be held chained to the level where their lawgiver found them.

But we have shown that the progressive development of the mental faculties should be the aim of every state.

The republic of Lycurgus could not enjoy perpetuity unless the minds of the people stood still; hence it could only secure its existence by overlooking the highest and only object of political government. What has been said in praise of the laws of Lycurgus, that Sparta would flourish only as long as it should observe them, is the very worst thing that could be said of them. What made Sparta an unhappy republic, was the very fact that it could not relinquish the old form of government which Lycurgus had contrived for it, without exposing itself to complete ruin; that it had to remain what it was; that it had to stand where a single man had seen fit to place it; its lawgiver could not have made it a more desolating present than this boasted perpetuity of a constitution which was so much opposed to the true greatness and bliss of the republic.

On looking at all these things in their totality, the false glitter by which the only prominent feature of the Spartan republic could dazzle an inexperierced eye, disappears in the light of truth; all we see is the imperfect attempt of a novice, the first political exercise of a young age that lacked the experience and the clearness of views necessary to comprehend the true relations of things. Nevertheless, however imperfect this first attempt may have been, it cannot fail to excite the interest of a philosophical student of universal history. It was a gigantic stride of the human mind, to treat as a work of art, interests which had hitherto been left to chance and passion. The

first attempt in the most difficult of all arts must necessarily have been imperfect, but, on this very account it is valuable. Sculptors first chiseled columns of Hermes, before they attempted the perfect form of an Antinous, of an Apollo of Belvidere; lawgivers will have to continue their rude attempts for a long time, until the happy equilibrium of political and social forces flashes upon their mental vision.

The marble bears patiently the fashioning chisel, and the strings which the musician causes to vibrate, respond to his touch without resistance.

The lawgiver, on the contrary, works upon a self-acting, resisting substance, the free will. It is only imperfectly that he can realize the ideal which he may have delineated in his brain ever so purely; but in such a case the bare attempt is worthy of all praise, if it is undertaken with disinterested benevolence, and carried out with practical wisdom.

SOLON.

Solon's legislation in Athens was almost the direct opposite of the legislation of Lycurgus. Inasmuch as these two republics play the principal part in the history of Greece, it is an interesting business to contrast them with each other, and to inquire into their respective defects and advantages.

After the death of Codrus, the royal office was abolished in Athens, and the highest power was confined for life to an authority named *Archon*. During a period of three hundred years thirteen Archontes ruled in Athens. We know nothing remarkable concerning the history of this period. The democratic spirit which was peculiar to the Athenians even at the time of Homer, again became active at the end of this period. The dignity of an Archon who held his office until his death, seemed too much like royalty; and some of the last Archontes may have usurped more power than was proper for them to do. For this reason an Archon's term of office was fixed at ten years. This was an important step toward liberty; by electing a new ruler every ten years, the nation renewed the act of sovereignty; every ten years it resumed its power, in order to give it away again, according to its good pleasure. By this measure, the Athenian people held in constant remembrance what the subjects of hereditary monarchies became entirely forgetful of, that the people are the source of the supreme power, and that the prince is only the creature of the nation.

For three hundred years the Athenians had tolerated the government of Archons, whose term of office lasted for life; but as to the ten-yearly Archontes, they became tired of them after the lapse of seventy years. This seemed natural; during this period the people had elected their rulers seven different times; consequently they had been reminded as many times of the possession of sovereignty. In the second period, the spirit of liberty was much more active than in the former.

The seventh of the ten-yearly Archontes was the last of this kind. The people desired to enjoy the exercise of sovereignty every year; they had found out that the possession of power for ten successive years might still lead to abuses. Henceforth the Archontes were elected every year, and inasmuch as one Archon might assume royal privileges even during this short period, they divided the governing power among nine Archontes, who all ruled together.

Three of these nine enjoyed privileges above the remainder. The first Archon, named Eponymus, presided over the body; he signed the public acts; the year was designated by his reign. The second Archon, surnamed Basileus, or King, had to watch over the interests of religion, and the business of worship; this office was continued from former periods, when the priestly dignity was a prerogative of the crown. The third, Polemarchus, was leader of the armies in war. The six remaining Archontes had the name Thesmotetes, because they had to watch over the constitution, and had to preserve and interpret the laws.

The Archontes were selected from the noblest families, until, at a later period, persons from the lower orders managed to be elected to the office. This constitution was an aristocratic rather than a democratic form of government: the people had not gained much by the change.

Next to the good feature of this form of government, which was, to prevent the abuse of power, on the other hand it labored under the great disadvantage of giving rise to factions. The supreme power had been possessed and relinquished by many citizens. On laying down their dignity, they found it difficult to relinquish the taste of power which they had once enjoyed. They desired again to hold office: they formed partisans, excited disturbances in the bosom of the republic. The rapid changes in the office of Archon excited a hope in every rich and distinguished Athenian to fill this office; as long as only one was invested with this dignity and kept it for a long period, there was no room for such a hope. At last this hope increased to impatience, and the impatience gave rise to dangerous plots. Both classes, as well those who had been, as those who desired to be Archontes, became alike dangerous to civil liberty.

The worst was, that the governing power being divided among several, and changing so frequently, became exceedingly weak. A strong hand was required to control the factions and to check the rebellious spirits. Powerful and bold citizens threw the republic into a state of confusion, and sought to be independent.

In order to arrest these disorders, a blameless and universally-feared citizen was commissioned to reform the laws, which had hitherto consisted in defective traditions. This citizen's name was Draco, a man without human feeling, who deemed human nature incapable of good, beheld all human actions in the gloomy mirror of his own dark soul, had no patience with the ordinary weaknesses of human nature; a poor philosopher, without any knowledge of human nature, with a cold heart, contracted mind, and unyielding prejudices. Such a man might do very well in executing laws, but no worse man could be selected to frame them.

But little of Draco's legislation has come to us,

but this little depicts the man and the character of his laws. All crimes were indiscriminately punished with death, idleness or murder, stealing a cabbage-head and a sheep, or arson and high treason. When asked why he punished trifling transgressions as severely as the heaviest crimes, he answered: "The most trifling violations of the law are worthy of death; for the graver offenses I know of no severer penalty, hence I have to punish both with death."

Draco's laws are the attempt of a beginner in the art of governing men. Terror is the sole instrument by means of which he obtains his end. He contents himself with punishing the transgressions that have been committed, he does not prevent them, he does not take the least pains to stop up the sources of evil, and to improve the character of the people. To extirpate a man for having done some wrong, is tantamount to cutting down a tree for having produced one bad fruit.

His laws were doubly condemnable, because they offended the feelings and rights of humanity, and were not adapted to the people for whom they were intended. If there was a people living who could not prosper under such laws, that people were the Athenians. The slaves of the Pharaohs might finally have accommodated themselves to such laws, but how could Athenians be expected to bend their necks under such a yoke?

They did not remain in force more than half a century, although he designated them with the presumptuous title of unchangeable laws.

Draco has fulfilled his mission very badly; his laws injured the republic instead of benefiting it. Since his laws could not be executed, and no other laws being in existence to meet emergencies, Athens was actually without any laws, and the saddest anarchy prevailed.

At that period the condition of the Athenian people was indeed deplorable. One class of citizens possessed every thing, the other class nothing; the poor were oppressed and plundered by the rich in the most cruel manner. The two classes were separated by an impassable gulf. Want compelled the poor to apply to the rich for help, who, like leeches, had drained them of their blood; but the assistance rendered was dearly paid for. Money had to be taken up at an enormous rate of interest, and if it was not refunded at the stipulated period, their property was forfeited by the foreclosure of mortgages. After having exhausted all their means, and being obliged to live, they had to sell their children into bondage, and finally, if this expedient likewise failed them, they had to pawn their own bodies, and suffer their creditors to sell them as slaves. There was no law against this inhuman traffic in human flesh, and the cruel rapacity of the rich knew no bounds. If the republic was not to be ruined by this frightful inequality of conditions, the equilibrium of property had to be restored by violent means.

Three parties had arisen among the people, all of whom aimed at the establishment of a social order based upon a just distribution of property. One party, to whom the poor citizens belonged, demanded a *democratic* government, an equal distribution of the soil like that which Lycurgus had introduced into Sparta; the other two parties, consisting of the rich, contended for an *aristocracy*.

The third party desired a combination of the two former, and opposing both, prevented either from carrying their point.

There was no chance of settling this difficulty in a quiet manner, unless a man could be found to whose judgment the three parties would be willing to bow, and whom they would be willing to adopt as their arbiter.

Happily such a man was found, and the services which he had rendered to the republic, his gentleness and justice, and the reputation of his wisdom had attracted the eyes of the nation for a long time previous. This man was *Solon*, like Lycurgus of royal descent, for he numbered Codrus among his ancestors. Solon's father had been a very rich man, but he had reduced his means of support by his largesses to the poor, and young Solon had to devote himself to mercantile pursuits during the first years of his citizenship. The journeys which he had to undertake, and his intercourse with foreign nations, afforded him many opportunities of enriching his mind, and of cultivating his genius by intercourse with foreign sages. At an early period he applied himself to poetry, and his talent in this art was afterward of great use to him in clothing moral truths and political rules in this delightful garb. His heart was susceptible to pleasure and love; the foibles of his youth rendered him forbearing toward others, and imparted to his laws the character of meekness and equity which distinguished them so beautifully from the laws of Draco and Lycurgus. He had also been a brave general, had conquered the island of Salamine for the republic, and had rendered other important military services. At that time the study of philosophy was not separated, as it now is, from political and military functions; the philosopher was the best statesman, the most experienced chieftain, the bravest soldier; his wisdom was made available in every department of civil life.

Solon was equally loved by all parties. The rich entertained high hopes of him, because he himself was a rich man. The poor confided in him, because he was an honest man. The intelligent portion of the Athenians desired him for their ruler, because the monarchy seemed to them the safest means of suppressing the spirit of faction; his relatives desired the same thing, but from interested motives, because they wished to share the government with him. Solon rejected this advice. "The monarchy," he said, "is a beautiful house, but it has no outlet."

He contented himself with allowing the people to elect him archon and lawgiver; he undertook this work unwillingly, and only out of respect for the nation.

He commenced his work with issuing the celebrated edict called *seisachtheia*, or discharge, by which all debts were abolished, and the pawning of one's body was forever prohibited. This edict was a violent infringement of the rights of property, but the extreme need into which the republic was plunged, rendered violent measures neces-

sary. This measure was the less evil of two, for the class who suffered by its operation, was much smaller than that which was benefited.

By this beneficent edict he at once relieved the poor of the heavy burden under which they had been groaning for centuries; the rich were not made poor by it, for they retained that which they actually possessed; he only took from them the means of being unjust. For all that, he earned no more gratitude at the hands of the poor than at those of the rich. The poor had been hoping for an equal distribution of the soil, such as the Spartans enjoyed, and grumbled because he had deceived them. They forgot that the lawmaker owes justice to the rich as well as to the poor, and that it was unadvisable to imitate the arrangement of Lycurgus, because it was unjust.

The ingratitude of the people extorted a modest complaint from the lawgiver's lips. "Formerly," he said, "my praises were sounded by all; now every body squints at me with an inimical eye." Soon, however, the beneficent consequences of his arrangements showed themselves. The peasants who had been enslaved heretofore, now were free; the citizen now cultivated as his own the field which he had heretofore been obliged to work for a creditor as a common day-laborer. Many citizens who had been sold to foreigners and already began to forget their own language, now returned to their former homes as free beings.

The confidence with which the lawgiver had first been elected, was restored. The whole reform of the republic was intrusted to his care, and unlimited power was given him to dispose of the property and the rights of the citizens. The first use he made of this power, was to abolish the laws of Draco, except such as were directed against murder and adultery.

After this he undertook the important task of giving a new constitution to the republic.

All Athenian citizens had to furnish a statement of their means of support, and, agreeably to the basis thus furnished, were divided into four classes.

The first class comprehended those who enjoyed a yearly income of fifteen hundred measures of dry and liquid property.

The second class comprehended those who had three hundred measures and were able to keep a horse.

The third class those who only owned half this amount, and where two had to join in order to make up the former number; for this reason they were designated a yoke.

The fourth class comprehended those who did not possess any landed property, and who earned their living by manual labor,—artists, mechanics, and day-laborers.

The three first of these four classes were permitted to hold public offices, from which those belonging to the fourth class were excluded; in public meetings, however, the members of the fourth class voted, like the rest, which secured to them a large share in the government of the country. All important transactions were laid before the national assembly, termed *ecclesia*, which decided concerning them: such as the election of officers, the distribution of offices, important litigations, financial transactions, peace and war. If the text of the law was obscure, and the judge was not perfectly certain concerning its meaning, the matter had to be laid before the ecclesia, which decided, in last resort, how the law was to be interpreted. From every tribunal there lay an appeal to the people. Before the age of thirty, nobody could be a member of the national assembly; but as soon as he had attained the legal age, he was not permitted to stay away from its sittings without rendering himself amenable to punishment; for Solon detested and opposed nothing more than indifference to the affairs of the state.

Thus the Athenian constitution had a perfectly democratic form; the people were *sovereign* in the strictest sense of the term; they ruled not merely by representatives, but directly, in their own names.

Soon, however, this arrangement led to unpleasant consequences. The people had attained power too rapidly to enjoy it with moderation; passions broke loose in the public assemblies, and the tumult which prevailed on such occasions did not always admit of calm deliberations, and wise decisions. To meet this inconvenience, Solon created a Senate, to which each of the four classes had to send one hundred members. This senate had previously to deliberate on the business that was to be laid before the ecclesia. Nothing that had not previously been considered by the senate could be brought before the people to whom the final decision was exclusively reserved. After a subject had been laid by the senate before the people, the orators rose for the purpose of influencing the people in their decision. This class has acquired considerable renown in history, and has done as much injury to the republic by seeking to influence the susceptible and versatile genius of the Athenians by their arts of oratory, as it might have benefited the state, if self-interest had not prompted the brilliant efforts of the speaker. The orator resorted to all the artifices of eloquence, in order to induce the people to adopt the views he had at heart; if he understood his art, the hearts of the people were in his hands. These orators bound the people by gentle and legitimate chains. They ruled by persuasion, and their rule was not the less powerful because it left the choice of the people seemingly free. The people were free to adopt or reject a proposition; but their freedom of choice was directed by the cunning with which the proposition was discussed and expounded. If the orators had always been animated by pure and true motives, this arrangement might have been conducive to much good. But soon the art of oratory was perverted by sophists, who made it their business to make evil look like good, and good like evil.

In the middle of Athens was a large public square, called the *prytaneum*, which was surrounded by the statues of gods and heroes. The Senators assembled in this square, and were on this account called Prytani. A prytan was expected to lead a blameless life. No debauchee,

no one who had treated his father with disrespect, no one who had ever been intoxicated, must think of being elected to the honorable office of a Senator.

Subsequently, after the population of Athens had increased, and in the place of the four classes introduced by Solon, ten had been established, the number of Senators likewise increased from four hundred to one thousand. Of these thousand prytani only five hundred were in active service annually, nor were these five hundred employed all at one time. Fifty of them governed for five weeks at a time, in such a manner that only ten of them were in office every week. Thus it became impossible to rule in an arbitrary manner, for each had as many witnesses to his acts as he had colleagues, and the successor had it in his power to examine the acts of his predecessor. Every five weeks the people assembled four times, not counting extraordinary convocations; by this arrangement all delay was rendered impossible, and business was transacted with dispatch.

Beside creating the Senate, Solon likewise restored the *Areopagus*, whose authority Draco had curtailed because this tribunal judged too mildly to suit his own cruel temper. Solon made it the supreme guardian of the laws, and, according to Plutarch's statement, attached the republic to these two tribunals, the Senate and Areopagus, as to two anchors.

These two tribunals had been instituted for the purpose of watching over the preservation of the republic and its laws. Ten other tribunals had charge of the application of the laws; they constituted the ordinary judiciary. Murderers were tried before four courts, the palladium, delphinium, phreattys, and heliæa. Only the two first were confirmed by Solon; they had been instituted by the kings. Unintentional homicide was tried by the palladium. By the delphinium those were tried who admitted having killed a person, but for justifiable causes. The phreattys was instituted for the trial of those who were accused of intentional murder after they had already fled out of the country on account of unintentional homicide. The accused appeared on board a vessel, and his judges were seated on the beach. If he was innocent, he returned to his place of exile in peace, in the joyous hope of being some time or other permitted to return home again. If he was adjudged guilty, he returned likewise without being molested, but he was never again permitted to return home.

The fourth tribunal, the heliæa, derived its name from the sun, because it was wont to meet immediately after sunrise, at some place that the sun shone upon. This court was an extraordinary commission of the other three tribunals; its members were both magistrates and judges. They had not only to apply and execute, but likewise to mend and interpret the laws. Their meeting was very solemn, and a terrible oath bound them to speak the truth.

As soon as sentence of death had been pronounced, and the accused had not evaded it by voluntary exile, he was delivered over to the eleven; this name was assigned to a commission to which each of the ten classes furnished a member, who, together with the executioner, made eleven. These eleven superintended the prisons and executed the sentence of death. The Athenians had three modes of putting criminals to death. They were either hurled down a precipice, or into the ocean; or they were decapitated, or poisoned with hemlock.

Next to the death-penalty, ranked exile. In happy countries this punishment appears terrible; there are countries from which it is no misfortune to be exiled. The fact that the Athenian people ranked exile next to the death-penalty, and, if perpetual, considered it equal to the latter, speaks well for the nobleness of their national sentiment. An Athenian who had lost his country, never found another Athens anywhere.

Exile, except ostracism, was accompanied by confiscation of property.

Citizens, who, by personal merit or good fortune, had acquired more influence and authority than was consistent with republican power, and were suspected of becoming dangerous to republican liberty, were sometimes banished without deserving their exile. To save the republic, injustice was practiced toward a single citizen. The idea which underlies this motive, may be praiseworthy in itself; but the remedy they resorted to, evinces political childishness. This sort of exile was termed ostracism, because the votes were written upon pieces of slate. Six thousand votes were necessary to inflict this penalty. In the nature of things, only the most meritorious citizens were ostracized: this penalty was therefore an honor rather than a disgrace, but it was, for all that, an act of injustice and cruelty, for it deprived the most worthy of that which was dearest to him, his home.

Disputes of less importance were brought before six inferior courts which never acquired much influence, because the condemned parties had the right of appeal from every one of them to the higher courts, and to the ecclesia. Every citizen plead his own cause, except women, children, and slaves. The duration of the speeches which the complainant and the defendant were allowed to make, was regulated by dropping water which served as a time-piece. The most important civil suits had to be decided in twenty-four hours.

Thus much of the civil and political institutions of Solon. But this lawgiver did not confine his attention to these points. The ancient lawmakers enjoyed the privilege of fashioning man in accordance with their laws; they extended their attention to the public morality, the formation of character; they never separated the man and the citizen, as is the case with us. Among us the laws are very frequently antagonistic to the customs and morals of the people; among the ancients a beautiful harmony prevailed between the laws and the public morals. This is the reason why their public bodies, charged with the maintenance of order, were animated by so much vital zeal, which is unknown in the present age; the form of government was impressed with indelible traits upon the souls of the citizens.

In this respect, however, we must not bestow undue praise upon the ancients. It may be said

that the intentions of ancient law-makers were, with scarcely an exception, praiseworthy and wise, but they did not always employ the best means to execute them. These means frequently show a deficient appreciation of human nature, and an important knowledge of the operations of the human mind. They went too far, where we do not go far enough. If our law-makers are wrong in entirely neglecting the enactment of laws for the observance of moral duties, the Grecian law-makers committed the great wrong of enforcing the fulfillment of moral duties by severe penalties. Freedom of the will is the first condition of moral beauty, and this beauty is destroyed the moment we undertake to enforce moral virtue by legal penalties. It is the noblest privilege of human nature to determine its own conduct, and to do the good for its own sake. No law should enforce, by compulsory means, fidelity to the friend, generosity toward an enemy, gratitude toward father and mother; if such means are employed, a free moral sentiment becomes the result of fear, a slavish emotion.

But to return to Solon.

One of his laws ordains that every citizen shall regard an insult perpetrated against any other citizen, as if it had been done to himself, and he shall not rest until the perpetrator is punished. The intention by which this law was dictated, is doubless a good one. The intention was to inspire every citizen with a warm interest in his neighbor, and to induce all to look upon each other as the members of a great and coherent whole. What a pleasant surprise it would afford us to arrive in a country, where every passer-by should protect us from insults! But how much less pleasure would this protection afford us, if we were told that is was *compulsory*.

Another law instituted by Solon, inflicts infamy upon any one who should remain neutral during a rebellion. This law was likewise dictated by a good intention. The law-maker was anxious to inspire his fellow-men with a lively interest in the affairs of the state. Indifference toward the country seemed to him a most detestable state of mind in any citizen. Neutrality may frequently result from such indifference; but he forgot that the most *intense* devotion to the country frequently *commands* such indifference, in case both parties, for instance, should be wrong, and the country should equally lose by the ascendency of either.

By another law, Solon forbids speaking ill of the dead, or even speaking ill of the living in public places, such as in courts, in a temple or theatre. He absolves children that are not born in wedlock, from all filial duties toward the father, on the plea that the father has already had his share of such duties by enjoying the sensual delight of procreation; he likewise absolved the son of the duty of taking care of his father, if this one had neglected to bind him to a trade. He permitted to make a will, and to give away one's property indiscriminately; for friends of one's own choice, he asserted, were worth more than mere relatives. He abrogated dowries, because he wished marriages to result from love, not from interest. Another proof of his gentle disposition is furnished by the fact that he called odious things by milder names. Taxes were called contributions; soldiers were guardians of the city; prisons were called apartments, and the abolition of debts he designated by the term relief. He moderated by wise regulations the luxury to which the Athenians were so prone; rigid laws watched over the morals of females, over the intercourse between the sexes, and the sanctity of marriages.

He ordained that these laws were only to be valid for one hundred years. How much more sagacious was he than Lycurgus! He comprehended that laws are only the instruments of culture; that nations, when fully grown, require a different direction from those that are still living in their infancy. Lycurgus perpetuated the mental infancy of his Spartans, in order to secure, by this means, the perpetuity of his laws; but both his republic and his laws have vanished. Solon, on the contrary, only instituted his laws for one hundred years, and even to this day, many of his laws are in force in the Roman code.

Solon has been reproached with giving too much power to the people. This reproach is not unfounded. In trying to avoid one cliff, oligarchy, he came too near the other, anarchy; but he only approached it, for the Senate and the Areopagus were powerful restraints of the popular will. The inseparable defects of a democratic government, tumultuous and vehement discussions, and party-spirit, could not, it is true, be avoided in Athens; but these evils are to be charged much more upon the form he chose than upon the essential nature of democracy. He erred in allowing the people to discuss their affairs in mass-meetings, instead of selecting representatives; on account of the crowd, such discussions could not well take place without confusion and tumult, and the large number of poor voters occasioned frequent resort to bribery. Ostracism, which could not be inflicted unless six thousand persons had voted in favor of the measure, may show us how tumultuous such mass-meetings of the people may have been. On the other hand, if we consider how well even the common man was acquainted with the business of the republic, how powerfully and actively every heart was moved by patriotic impulses, how much care the lawgiver had taken to make the love of country the leading sentiment in the heart of every citizen: we shall acquire a better idea of the political sense of the Athenian people, whom we should not place upon a level with the common people of this age. All large meetings lead to more or less lawlessness as their immediate result; smaller assemblies find it difficult to keep clear of aristocratic despotism. To hit the right mean between these two extremes, is a difficult problem that will only be solved by future generations. I shall always admire the spirit that animated Solon in giving his laws the spirit of sound and genuine political science which never loses sight of the fundamental principle upon which all governments should rest, which consists in the people making their own laws, and inducing them to fulfill the duties of a citizen from rational conviction and patriotism, not from a

slavish fear of punishment, from a blind and passive submission to the will of a master.

Solon's respect for human nature was a beautiful trait in his character. He never sacrificed man to the state, or the end to the means, but he caused the state to be subservient to the high purposes of human existence. His laws served as yielding bonds, by whose guiding but gentle and scarcely-perceptible support the minds of the citizens were enabled to move with freedom and ease in every direction; whereas the laws of Lycurgus operated like iron fetters, against which the bold heart chafed until it sank bleeding and oppressed under the heavy yoke. Every possible avenue of progress was opened by the Athenian lawgiver to the genius and industry of his fellow-citizens; the Spartan lawgiver, on the contrary, stopped up every avenue of development, except political merit. Lycurgus enjoined idleness by law; Solon punished it severely. Hence every virtue matured in Athens, trades and arts flourished, every channel of industry was stirring with life; every field of knowledge was cultivated in that republic. Has Sparta produced a Socrates, a Thucydides, a Sophocles, a Plato? Sparta could only produce rulers and warriors; no artists, no poets, no thinkers, no citizens of the world. Both Solon and Lycurgus were great men, both were honest men; but how different have been their actions, since they started from opposite grounds! Round about the Athenian law-giver, liberty and joy, industry and abundance, the arts and virtues, the graces and muses are grouped, look up to him with feelings of gratitude, and call him father and creator. Lycurgus is surrounded by tyranny and its horrid opposite, bondage, shaking its chains and cursing the author of its misery.

The character of a whole people is the most faithful expression of its laws, and the most reliable judge of their worth or nothingness. A Spartan's mind was contracted, and his heart unfeeling. He was proud and overbearing toward his allies, cruel toward the vanquished, inhuman to his slaves, and servile to his superiors; in his negotiations he was unscrupulous and perfidious, despotic in his decisions; even his virtues and greatness were deficient in the pleasing loveliness that alone wins our hearts. The Athenian, on the contrary, was gentle and meek in his intercourse with his fellow-men, polite and lively in conversation, affable toward inferiors, hospitable and obliging to strangers. He was fond of fashion and comfort, but this did not prevent him from fighting in battle like a lion. Clad in purple, and anointed with incense, he yet caused the millions of Xerxes and even the rude Spartans to tremble. He loved the pleasures of the table, and found it difficult to resist the allurements of sensuality; but drunkenness and shameless conduct were punished with disgrace; delicacy and propriety were cultivated with more care by the Athenians than by any other nation of antiquity. In a war against King Philip, the Athenians captured some letters belonging to the king, among which one was to his spouse; all were opened except this one, which was sent back to him intact. In fortune, the Athenian was generous, and firm in misfortune; he then never hesitated to sacrifice every thing for his country. He treated his slaves humanely, and the servant, if ill-treated, was permitted to bring suit against his master. The generosity of these people extended even to animals; after the construction of the temple Hekatonpedon had been finished, it was decreed that all the animals which had assisted in the work, should be discharged from all further labor, and should be allowed during the remainder of their lives to pasture on the richest meadows without being ever called upon to do any more work. Afterward one of these animals returned to the work of its own accord, running mechanically in front of the others which drew freight. This spectacle so touched the people that they ordered special keepers for this animal, who fed it at the public expense in a separate stable.

It is due to justice to mention the deficiencies of the Athenians, for history should not be a flatterer. These people whom we have admired on account of their fine manners, their meekness, their wisdom, very often rendered themselves guilty of the most shameless ingratitude toward their greatest men, and of cruelty toward their vanquished enemies. Spoiled by the flatteries of their orators, having become insolent by their freedom, and vain of their brilliant achievements, they frequently treated their allies and neighbors with intolerable pride, and were governed in their public discussions by a frivolous and intoxicating levity which frequently neutralized the exertions of their wisest statesmen, and brought the republic to the brink of ruin. The individual Athenian was social and gentle; but in public meetings he put off this character. Hence Aristophanes depicts to us his countrymen as sensible old men at home, but as fools in public meetings. The love of glory, and the thirst for novelties ruled them to excess; to gain glory, the Athenian frequently risked his fortune, his life, and not unfrequently, his virtue. A crown of olive-branches, an inscription upon a column which promulgated his deserts, stimulated him more keenly to great deeds than the Persian was stirred up by all the treasures of his king. The Athenians manifested their gratitude with the same extravagance as their ingratitude. To be accompanied home from a public meeting in triumph by such a people, to hold their attention only for one day, afforded a higher and a truer delight to the vain-glorious Athenian than any monarch could procure for his greatest favorites; for it is something quite different to touch a proud and sensitive people than to please one man only. The Athenian had to be in a constant state of excitement; his heart was unceasingly aspiring after new sensations and enjoyments. This desire for newness had to be gratified by new means, day after day, if it was not to become a source of public mischief. Hence it was that a public spectacle arranged at the proper moment, frequently preserved the public tranquillity which was threatened by an outbreak; hence it was that an usurper frequently won the game, if he only knew how to minister to this passion for new sensations by an uninterrupted course of amusements. But woe even to the most meritorious citizen, if he did not understand

the art of keeping up the excitement of newness, and rejuvenating his merit from day to day!

The evening of Solon's life was less cheerful than his life had warranted. In order to evade the importunities of the Athenians who beset him every day with questions and propositions, he left Athens as soon as his laws were in operation, and undertook a journey through Asia Minor, to the islands and to Egypt, where he conversed with the wisest men of the age, and visited the court of King Crœsus of Lydia, and the court of Sais in Egypt. What is recorded concerning his interview with Thales of Miletus, and with Crœsus, is too well known to require any further notice at my hands. On his return to Athens, he found the republic torn by three factions under the leadership of two dangerous men—Megacles and Pisistratus. Megacles rendered himself powerful and formidable by his riches, Pisistratus by his political cunning and his genius. This Pisistratus, Solon's former favorite, and the Julius Cesar of Athens, one day appeared before the ecclesia, pale, stretched out upon his chariot, and stained with blood from a wound which he had inflicted upon himself. "Thus," said he, "my enemies have maltreated me on your account. My life is in constant danger, unless you take measures to guard it." Thereupon his friend moved, in accordance with his own previous arrangements, that a body-guard should be formed whose exclusive business it should be to accompany him in public. Solon suspected the treacherous object of this measure, and opposed it with zeal, but without effect. The proposition being adopted, Pisistratus received a body-guard, at whose head he at once took possession of the citadel of Athens. Now the scales fell from the people's eyes, but too late. Terror seized upon Athens. Megacles and his friends escaped from the city, which they left to the usurper. Solon, who had not been deceived by his plans, was the only one that did not lose his courage; he now used the same efforts in animating the sinking courage of his fellow-citizens, that he had employed before in preventing them from committing the rash act, from the consequences of which they were now suffering. When nobody would listen to him, he went home, and laid his arms in front of his door, exclaiming: "Now I have done all I was able to do for my country's good." He never thought of escape, but continued to censure the folly of the Athenians and the unscrupulous conduct of the tyrant in the most unmeasured terms. When asked by his friends, what gave him the courage to bid defiance to power, he replied: "My age gives me courage." He died without beholding his country's freedom.

But Athens had not fallen into barbarous hands. Pisistratus was a noble-hearted man who honored Solon's laws. Having been twice expelled by his rival, and having twice reconquered the government of the city, he caused his usurpation to be forgotten by his brilliant virtues, and the services he rendered to the republic. Nobody perceived the loss of liberty, so gentle and quiet was his reign. Not he ruled, but Solon's laws. Pisistratus opened the golden age of Athens; under him the arts began to dawn. He died regretted like a father.

His work was continued by his sons Hippias and Hipparch. Both brothers governed harmoniously, and were animated by the same love of science. Under their government, Simonides and Anacreon were already flourishing, and the Academy was founded. The people made rapid strides toward the great age of Pericles.

ESSAYS CONCERNING DIFFERENT SUBJECTS.

ON THE MIGRATIONS OF NATIONS, CRUSADES, AND THE MIDDLE AGES.*

The new social system which, born in the North of Europe and Asia, was introduced by the conquering nations upon the ruins of the Western empire, had now had seven centuries to try its strength in this more extended sphere, and in new combinations, and to develop itself in all its forms and varieties. The descendants of the Vandals, Suevi, Alani, Goths, Heruleans, Longobardi, Franks, Burgundians, and so forth, had become permanent inhabitants of the soil which had been invaded by their ancestors, sword in hand; when all at once the spirit of migration and plunder, which had led them to their new homes, was again kindled in their hearts at the expiration of the eleventh century, in another form and by other causes. Europe now sent back to southwestern Asia the devastating swarms which it had received from the northern portion of this continent, seven hundred years ago, but with very different and unequal success; for as many torrents of blood the barbarians had been obliged to shed for the purpose of founding perpetual kingdoms in Europe, as many did it cost their Christian descendants to conquer a few cities and fastnesses in Syria, which they were to lose again forever, two hundred years later.

The frantic folly which gave rise to the crusades, and the acts of violence by which the realization of this undertaking was accompanied, are not inviting to an eye bounded by the horizon of the present. But if we contemplate this event in its connection with the centuries that preceded and followed it, its origin seems too natural to excite our amazement, and its results appear too beneficent, not to induce us to regard the crusades with feelings of satisfaction. Looking at their causes, we find that this expedition of the Christians to the Holy Land is such a spontaneous, such an inevitable result of their age, that any intelligent reader of history, acquainted with the historical premises of those great events, must have imagined them as the necessary developments of previously-operating causes. Looking at their results, we find that the Crusades constitute the first blow by which superstition itself began to mend the evils which it had inflicted upon humanity for so many years. No historical problem

* This Essay formed part of the introductory treatise printed in the first volume of the first part of the historical memoirs published by the author.